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ABSTRACT

Because Japanese society has traditionally emphasized the group rather than the individual, less research has been done to understand how Japanese culture conceptualizes the individual and how that individual develops within the society. This paper focuses on the individual in Japanese society. Following an introduction (Section I), Section II focuses on the self and society in Japan. Subtopics include the personal aspects of self (the "hara"), social aspects of the self, and society and affiliation. Specific topics cover definition, genesis, and components of the "hara" (the self) and its relation to abilities, social behavior, introspection, and the practice of "social moratoria"; social and anti-social behaviors and psychological disorders; and formal and informal modes of social interaction, homogeneity, uniqueness and affiliation, and the dual society. Section III presents cases of learning in Japanese society in the context of the maternal child- rearing process, training in the traditional arts, learning in the schools, and training in the workplace. Section IV examines the life cycles in Japan from infancy through retirement. A seven-page list of project research papers concludes the document. (IS)

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The Anatomy of the Hara:

Japanese Self in Society

Merry I. White and Lois K. Taniuchi

May 1980

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Project on Human Potential

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The attached papers include several collaborative efforts and some individually produced documents, relating to the study of human potential in Japan and the nature of the Japanese self and society. The collaborative papers are reports of the current state of our ideas concerning the Japanese conception of human potential, and have developed from our discussions during the past four months.

We consider these papers a means of communicating ideas for the purpose of engaging in active communication from other Van Leer Project people rather than definitive statements. Moreover, the process of collaboration has necessarily involved the synthesis of sometimes quite divergent views and these papers may reflect a less than completely homogeneous perspective. Hopefully, the incorporation of further suggestions will stimulate the development of more useful comparative formulation of the Japanese case.

I. Self and Society in Japan

II. Cases of Learning in Japanese Society

III. The Life Cycle in Japan

Other papers:

I. "Stranger in His Native Land: Group Boundaries and the Japanese International Businessman," (dissertation), Merry I. White

II. Field notes and observations on the self and learning from trip to Japan, by Lois, forthcoming

N.B. The numbered references in the text refer to the numbered books and articles in the attached bibliography.

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I. INTRODUCTION

There is a paradox inherent in Japanese culture: How has the country's emergence as a dynamic and innovative economic power and the rapid adaptation to foreign technology, consumer goods and social forms occurred in the context of a very stable and persistent cultural core? Japanese society presents an "exotic paradox" to the Western observer, who enjoys the juxtaposition of high technology and geisha parties, booming overseas exports and the tranquillity of the tea ceremony. A parallel riddle is evident in Japanese personal psychology as well. Rapid change in daily life and vividly contrasting periods of an individual's life cycle have not produced personal psychological dislocation. Nor has the "situational ethic"[4] created problems for personal identity. The persistent cultural core which has acted as a stable backdrop to social change has a counterpart in the individual's basic self which resists the threat to autonomy and identity created by minute-to-minute environmental and relational changes in daily life. One might say that analogous to a self-confirming national self is a personal self which derives its identity confirmation from within, and needs no testing or validation in the social environment. We will investigate this personal self in the context of the development of abilities and the process of learning, as well as in the setting of deep and permanent embeddedness in a social framework.

Over the past thirty years the Japanese have developed a strong interest in their own unifying cultural and psychological core which defines the "Japaneseness" which lies behind the society's constant change and readiness to innovate.* There has not, however, been an analogous investigation of the personal core underlying the situational "social self."

While keys to this problem of self in Japan exist in everyday explanations and practice, Japanese scholars have not published a coherent "ethnopsychology" to explain the accommodation of inconsistent elements in a unitary self. One of the reasons for this apparent lack is that indigenous explanations are usually formulated in the context of what we would call a sociological explanatory mode -- an "ethnosociology" rather than an "ethnopsychology." For example, phenomena for which we would use individual psychological explanations would be explained in Japan by reference to social environment and the structure of relationships.**

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* In the mid-1960's, a dialogue began in the media over what it means to be Japanese (Nihonjinron boomu) or boom in the study of Japanese consciousness. See Minami Hiroshi, "The Introspection Boom" Japan Interpreter, Vol. VIII, No. 2 (Spring 1973). This dialogue has tended towards discussions of Japan's place in the world, but also includes questions of cultural and personal identity within Japanese society.

** Racial or biological explanations are also popular, such as the statement that Japanese people are ill-equipped for international travel because they have no antibodies to foreign illnesses, "being an isolated island race." (Sugiyama)[56]

While an indigenous concept of the self does exist and there are categories of phenomena whose causes are attributed to this self, it is not considered as important a factor in the development of abilities and the manifestation of behavior as it is in the West. Similarly, where there is a problem which a Western observer would attribute to a psychological cause, the Japanese typically first look for social origins.* There is much less interest in long-term or analytic therapies, more in practical problem-solving by sorting out and making compromises in interpersonal relationships. Thus an indigenous view of Japanese psychology begins with the social frame.

While many observers, and the Japanese themselves, discuss explicitly the importance of the social context especially relationships and group membership, in Japanese identity-formation, behavior motivation, and ideology, few have considered in a penetrating way either the individual in isolation or the interrelationship between the individual and his group context. One reason for this lies in the readiness exhibited by some Western and Japanese observers to describe Japanese group identity as either a social "given" or a "basic drive" and to leave it at that. The first "explanation" assumes that "by nature" Japanese people have a group-oriented identity and so look to the group for support and confirmation. The other, elaborated by Takeo Doi[12] sees the group as a

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* Many companies have rest-homes in the country for employees who show signs of "not-fitting" in the office or plant. This is thought to be caused by strain or overwork and the cure is a holiday from the intense relationships, before proceeding with the object of social re-integration.

locus for the expression of a basic individual psychological drive -- amae (presuming upon another's indulgence or placing oneself in the position of the recipient of passive love). In either explanation, the group provides the most basic source of personal identity and motivation for the development of abilities, and the nature of the individual self is not explicated independently of the person's "need to merge." What is needed is an ethnography of the self in order to better explain some of the contradictions of Japanese identity and group membership, and, using the ethnopsychological and ethnosociological models used by the Japanese themselves to develop a more complex picture of the normative frame for human potential in Japan.

There are several features of the Japanese view of their own society which should be considered. There is great belief in Japan in their homogeneity as a people and in their cultural uniqueness. These beliefs will be considered again later in the context of "Self and Society", but are mentioned here as perspectives in the Japanese "world new." It has been observed that the Japanese like to consider their society homogeneous ("We are like a plain white silk cloth" as one banker put it) and themselves as predictable and uniform in character and behavior. In a recent Prime Minister's Office public opinion poll, over 90% of respondents reported that they consider themselves as members of the "middle class."*

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* In fact, in terms of social and educational goals, the purchase of consumer durables and "culture", a great majority of Japanese do in fact fit their self-designation of middle class. Japan Echo, Vol. VI, No. 2, 1979.

The clear preference for the similarities seems to transcend and mask many dissimilarities and incongruities which clearly exist among Japanese. One of the most frequently mentioned commonalities is based on the idea of shared identity as Japanese. "Japaneseness" may be defined differently by different people, but every Japanese is considered to possess its essential characteristics.* Although there is a strong interest in recognizing small signs of differentness this attention to small details of aberrance serves the purpose of emphasizing ideal norms. The homogeneous model is not a static model in Japan, however, for similarity and predictability of the entire group are more important than adherence to an established or traditional norm. Thus, there are many fads in Japan, and styles of all kinds change rapidly. Change is welcome as long as everyone participates, and Japan can scarcely be called a "conservative" society. Thus, while there are society-wide differences between people corresponding to gender, age, and urban/rural environments, as well as recognized differences between people who belong to different historical generations[48] demands on the individual at each age stage and for each context are relatively predictable and very compelling. However, the degree to which Japanese society is truly homogeneous is a subject for further investigation.

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* "Differentness" in Japan is problematic. Minorities, such as Korean residents and the former outcast burakumin have a particularly difficult time. Those who don't fit the expectations of the majority groups, the roles ascribed to their sex, or the lifestyle typical of others their own age experience much discomfort. Vide, Merry I. White, diss. (Chapters I and V).

The concern with Japanese uniqueness, on a society-wide level, to some degree parallels an interest in the isolation and separateness of each person's internal self (hara). This will be discussed in greater detail later, however, the feeling that the Japanese experience is essentially untranslateable creates a well-insulated cultural boundary. For instance, it is felt that a foreigner can never, no matter how long in residence in Japan, truly assimilate Japanese ways. The grudging praise of a foreigner's Japanese language ability is always prefaced with "for a foreigner...." Even a Japanese raised overseas encounters this barrier, for racial heritage is not enough. The uniqueness of the solitary self, on the other hand, creates a loneliness which is exploited in art and literature as a most poignant and compelling imagery. It is, for example, the "wabi-sabi" (solitary, lonely) aspect of the enjoyment of nature which is most compelling. The creative tension between society and the solitary self is seen as a basis for artistic expression.

What is most interesting in the case of Japan is the existence of highly prescribed social role behavior (and the definition of people as primarily "social animals") and a strong tendency towards conformity together with an energetic flexibility and adaptiveness and a striking ability to stimulate the individual's potential for achievement. One way to analyze this paradox is to examine Japanese definitions and explanations for behavior and identity. By examining the roles and identities of the group and the self, and the definition and training of abilities in various

contexts, we may begin to resolve the apparent contradictions of Japanese society. Beginning with a look at conscious models of the self, we will then consider the relationship between individuals and the group, and describe the ethnopsychology of learning which forms the basis of the adaptation of individuals to their society.

There are few societies in the world as focussed as that of Japan on the development of human potential. The Japanese are far ahead of the rest of the industrialized world in realizing the limits of industrial development and resource expenditure and have long ago emphasized their greatest resource, people, as a focus for development. Stimulated by many influences and inspired by many goals, the development of human abilities in Japan has become a major objective. In the school systems, the home, on the factory floor, in flower-arranging classes and in the offices of giant trading companies, the emphasis is on attaining the highest level of achievement and the most developed abilities. "Human potential" is seen as made up of will, energy and single-hearted hard work, together with ability; and, achievement is seen as a measure of these elements rather than of innate individual capabilities.

The fact that the Japanese consider ability development as relatively unrelated to the individual's basic identity, or to put it another way, that they do not identify the self by the person's abilities is crucial to our understanding of self and society in Japan. The fact

that although at the deepest level abilities have little to do with personal identity, yet abilities are nurtured to such high levels by means of great personal effort supported by a society-wide interest in creating abilities, may seem extraordinary to a Western observer. It is this most interesting riddle which informs our study of the Japanese self and society.

While Japanese conceptual frameworks have provided us with the vocabulary and foci and to some extent, the explanations for this discussion, the links between these concepts are ours. Although the concepts have generally been explicitly treated in the literature, the links between them have often been developed through discussion. While maintaining our responsibility for an accurate presentation we have nonetheless allowed ourselves the freedom to create what Geertz has called "an interpretive work of art."

II. SELF AND SOCIETY

The Western interest in duality -- in the tension between good and evil and polarities of all kinds -- is complemented by and perhaps causally related to our concern with unity and "wholeness." We have a need to see the self as possessing a single and consistent character and to see that self as the actor and source of identity in all contexts. The Japanese, on the other hand, prefer what has been called a "situational" model, which allows different aspects of an individual's self to operate independently in different sectors of life and experience. The fact that the Japanese adjust behavior and even what we would call personality to suit different contexts has led some Western observers to conclude that they have "no ontologically permanent self."[42] Others have said that "...the Japanese group requires a weaker, or at least a less obtrusive self."[10] The Western idea that an individual has a single self wherein resides full responsibility for coherent, consistent actions and responsibilities leads observers to attempt to find a similar single focal self in the Japanese ethnopsychology. Finding no such singularity of self, they then assume that Japanese lack a sense of basic individual identity and conclude that they are, at core, "social animals."

However, this conclusion ignores the possibility of a multiplicity of sources for validation and authentication of the self as well as the possibility that individual basic identity can in fact exist (and perhaps flourish) without constant testing or acknowledgement in the public arena. Western "identity crises" may be a function of the fact that our "selves" are constantly on the line and given relatively little flexibility in the changing outside world. A singular unified character is responsible for our behavior, relationships, successes and failures, our private validation and ultimately, our fate in the next world. The Japanese self, we suggest, is not subject to such burdens since there are different sources of strength and ability within it relevant to and responsible for, different sectors of experience.

A. The Personal Aspects of Self - The *Hara*

1. Definition and Genesis of Individual *Hara*

We might use the analogy of a Japanese *bonsai* tree to help explain the plurality of aspects of self in Japan. The basic character of the tree is determined by the living organism, we may even say the life principle which informs the tree. This basic character is equivalent to what the Japanese call the *hara*, which we could also call a "personal" or "internal" self. This is said to be the repository of one's real character and non-specific potential (as opposed to specific abilities). It is the nearest Japanese equivalent to the Western idea of self as one's true nature and identity. The *hara* is the self as it is personally experienced by the individual and is considered to be separate from one's relationships, abilities and achievements which define one for the *outside* world. The *hara*, unlike the Western self, is not subject to confirmation in the outside world, or even to some extent in the primary group. One's identity as an individual is a given, and is never experienced as being in peril.

The nature of one's *hara* is partly innate and partly the result of experiences in earliest childhood. It is considered to change very little throughout an individual's life -- as in the saying, "*Mitsugo no tamashii hyaku made*"("The soul of the child of three lasts for the rest of his life"). The critical period for the formation of the *hara* is the first three years of life and is believed to be influenced by three major factors.

First, a child at birth is considered to have a unique hara. Second, this hara may in part be genetically influenced, and a child may have a hara which resembles that of his parents or grandparents. Third, the hara is also to some degree influenced by the environment in which the child is raised. This influence is effected slowly, more by osmosis than by direct training, and the effect of the environment is not so great as to negate the uniqueness of each individual's hara.

2. Commonality in The Hara

There is an important portion of the hara of every Japanese person which is the same as that of all other Japanese. This is the part of the self which is invoked when the Japanese say "We Japanese feel" or, "The Japanese are homogenous people." We might call this a predisposition towards commonality which exists alongside the individuality inherent in each person's hara. Contributing to the sense of commonality is the influence of the physical environment which is thought to create a common bond between Japanese people. Geography is said to have an important effect on national character.[18] For example, the effect of living on an island topology rather than a continent is seen as causing an "island mentality" independently of cultural and historical effects. Whether one lives in a skyscraper in a cosmopolitan city or in a fishing village, one is assumed to share the "mental personality" of an island dweller. Climate, especially the supposed presence of "four seasons" is also seen by the Japanese as affecting their personality in a unique way.[39]

3. Components of The Hara

The following is a "pot-luck" compendium of elements of the hara as reported and defined by Japanese informants. The components do not form a systematic presentation but elaborate aspects of the Japanese concept of self.

Another concept relating to the hara is "ki." If the hara is likened to the organism of the tree, the ki is the life force inside the tree which gives impetus to its growth and to its adaptation to the environment. Ki is the dynamic aspect of the hara, whose characteristics determine the style of individual hara expression. Ki can be translated as "feeling" or "spirit" and it is the energy which inhabits living individuals and is manifested in their actions. Individuals are characterized by a certain type of ki, and the Japanese describe many basic character traits as certain types of ki. A person may have a short ki (short tempered), a long ki (even tempered), a small ki (timid) or a different ki (crazy), or any of a number of different adjectives describing qualities of ki.*

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* Not all compounds using ki refer to basic character traits. Some refer to moods.

The expression of emotions is conditioned by training and environment, but basic emotions come from the hara -- in the form of kimochi, or feeling, and from the environment as kanji, or a kind of "emotional impression." The kimochi can and often should be masked, but kanji are often situationally appropriate. Kanji can exist in things and environment as well as in people, and this concept seems to relate to an animistic interpretation of the direct relationship between human beings and their natural setting.

Individuals are seen as having different personalities, and these are said to be the manifestation of a combination of one's hara and abilities in a social environment. The hara as such is not usually an important part of the social environment and should not be too evident in non-intimate relationships. Personality in the Western context, on the other hand, seems to include abilities, behaviors and one's innate character or self as expressed in a social environment.

Environment affects the hara in another way, through the medium of kuro (suffering or hardship). Kuro has a beneficial effect on the hara, deepening and maturing it, and removing much of its self-centeredness. Many Japanese go so far as to say that without kuro, an individual's self cannot be considered mature. People who imagine themselves to have had relatively more hardships in their life than others may brag about the situation, imputing greater maturity, seriousness, and weight to their hara,

than to that of the other less unfortunate individual. Kuro can also have a remedial effect, and advice to parents of teenagers may be to the effect of "kuro sasete hō ga ii" (make them suffer).

Kuro can come in many forms: Psychological, physical, or environmental. New brides in their mother-in-law's household undergo severe psychological kuro in an effort to adjust to loneliness, strict role demands, and absence of amae in their new environment. Women often regale their daughters-in-law with the intensity of their kuro as a young bride, and the relative ease of the new bride's lot (and therefore the immaturity of the young bride). Individuals with a long-term illness which causes discomfort and pain perceive their condition as physical kuro, and although the illness may debilitate them physically, it enhances them spiritually, and many assume an air of martyrdom concerning their condition. Any individual who lived through the difficult wartime period has automatically experienced and benefitted from an environmental kuro which is unavailable to the overly-fortunate generation born after them, as young adults are tiresomely reminded. Although young people may not enjoy being told this, most of them do accept the reality of the maturity gained by those experiences, and feel somewhat apologetic for their lack of hardship.*

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* Stories about the hardships of the Great Depression are told in a similar fashion to American young people. However, the tacit moral of the story is more often that the children should feel grateful to the parents for the latter's more bountiful provision of resources, than that the parent has been made spiritually stronger by the experience.

The emphasis on the importance of kuro to the spiritual advancement of the hara is deeper than a simple generational game of one-up-manship; it is seen to be the basis of psychological change and maturation.

4. Abilities, Social Behavior, and The Hara

Abilities are not "given" as is the hara, but are the result of hard work and the direct influence of the environment. Hard work and diligent practice are considered most important in the acquisition of abilities in both educational situations and society at large. The modern Japanese proverb "pass with four, fail with five" means that sleeping four hours a night rather than indulging in five during the marathon examination preparation will help a child enter a prestigious university. This is a caricature of the feeling that rather than native talent or inborn ability, hard work and perseverance are the keys to academic success.

Abilities are thus the result of individual striving within a supportive environment which provides both enriching experiences and specific training. These experiences begin at home, where the supportive environment is provided by the mother. She is seen as especially responsible for the development of her child's abilities. In addition to specific training, she is responsible for creating an appropriate tone and atmosphere through which the child will absorb an attitude of interest in and respect for the proper abilities. She is also responsible for training her child in socially correct behavior which the formal interactions outside the home demand. Some of this training is linguistic, for the complex patterns of polite speech require different expressions of respect and deference in different situations. Proper behaviors in greetings, and in giving or

receiving gifts are also among the earliest forms of social training. In teaching these polite behaviors, the mother does not believe that she is training a generous character in her child, rather, she sees what she is teaching as a practical set of abilities which the child will need to mask his possibly contrary feelings where they are inappropriate to social situations.

Although there is some feeling that there is a critical period in childhood for the development of abilities (with an advantage accruing to a person who begins at a younger age), there is a strong feeling that abilities can be developed by diligent study at any time in the life course. Because the training of abilities is distinct from the molding of the basic hara aspects of a child's personality, families can encourage this training without worrying about the effect of the training methods themselves on the child's character. While many parents decry the severity of the "examination hell" to which their children are subjected, it is seen as necessary discipline for developing the academic excellence which will admit them to a good university. Although parents may regret the lack of play time, or the emotional pressure of the threat of failure, the general feeling is that the unfortunate circumstances and strains of this period of life are temporary, and will not affect the child's basic character.

This conceptualization of hara and abilities as separate entities has ramifications for the way the Japanese view the origins of abilities.

Because abilities are the result of individual hard work and environmental support, and because the hara is relatively unrelated to an individual's abilities, there is less of a tendency to see "innate genius" as a part of the basic self or to consider it as a prerequisite to the training of high levels of ability. Although some children are recognized as quicker than others, their rapid progress is attributed mainly to differing amounts of diligence and environmental support rather than a differential endowment of genius. The Talent Education Method is a prime example of the use of this psychology, with its emphasis on talent as created rather than inborn (Talent Education means "education to produce talent"), and its basic tenet is that all children can learn to play an instrument well. To the Japanese, the important aspect of differences in ability is not that there may be a residual amount of difference in learning ability left after removing the effects of hard work and environmental support (few Japanese would deny this), but that everyone can attain a respectable standard of functioning through hard work and a nurturant environment.

This is not to say that the hara and abilities are seen as completely unrelated. The hara can influence a person's abilities through the compatibility of its characteristics with the type of endeavor in question. For example, a person whose hara is of a very diligent, exacting type may do very well academically, whereas a person whose personality type is less disciplined may require more effort to accomplish the same goal. Another interconnection between the hara and abilities occurs when long

practice of an ability gradually changes the hara. This connection is especially visible in the Japanese view of artistic training (tea ceremony or Talent Education violin practice to cite two examples). As the individual spends many hours each day in practice and study, and concentration on the principles of the art, immersion in the artistic environment causes the principles embodied in the art form to influence the hara gradually in the direction of the environmental characteristics. In this way, Talent Education sees character training as resulting from long and diligent study of the music through the medium of the violin. The difficulty of this endeavor may also be seen in the inordinate amount of practice necessary to change the hara through the Zen practice of meditation, and in the long hours of simple-minded apprenticeship tasks required in many crafts before a novice is allowed to touch the loom, the knife, or the paintbrush.

The Japanese, however, do not assume that all men and women are equally likely to be endowed with a given hara, or to develop the same abilities. Women typically have more nurturant and less aggressive hara, and are perhaps more given to emotionality. Men are likely to be more self-centered, self-assertive, and less prone to emotional influence. Women are more likely to develop abilities which require detail work, difficult social interaction, and in general, less use of the intellect. Men are more adept at matters involving business, trade, and matters of authority. There are exceptions, of course, and although it may be acknowledged that a person has an ability or a hara characteristic which is atypical for his or her gender, there are likely to be sanctions imposed upon the individual who displays this atypicality too prominently.

5. Introspection and Moratoria

While the hara is (relatively) inviolate, there are strategies for its protection in the face of external crisis or chaos. Zen training, rather than freeing a person from self (as many Westerners believe) actually teaches that focussing singleheartedly inward on the self will fortify and stabilize the hara.[23] The Japanese interest in wholehearted effort and concentrated energy at work and play is based in the idea that if the hara is willing, the flesh is strong enough for any task -- the basic optimism and confidence that all reasonable (and some "superhuman") goals can be accomplished. Examination and restoration of the hara identity is legitimated at several stages of life and in several established introspective aesthetic or religious pursuits. As Takie Lebra points out,[32] the Japanese feel that social and institutional demands deflect attention away from the hara which may result in an imbalance between the personal and social selves. When imbalance becomes too great, a "social moratorium" is called, during which a wide range of "self" focussed behaviours may take place. The person withdraws -- for a fifteen-minute private tea ceremony in his garden, for a walk or a "vacation." Albert Craig mentions that the Japanese love of nature and pursuit of solitary aesthetic experiences may be a "search for oases of personal autonomy" away from the demands of the group -- another way in which one reclaims one's hara.[10]

Kobo Abe's novel and film Woman in the Dunes is a description of a moratorium which turned into a total escape. In extreme cases such as this, the social moratorium may lead to emotional anarchy -- expressed for example in literature and in life in self-destruction and suicide, in retreat to solitary hermitages, in masochistic perversions and in the exaltation of the existential "masterless samurai" role in film and fiction. At its best and most functional for social cohesion, introspection achieves personal integrity through searching for and discovering an intact, autonomous hara.

This kind of introspective "therapy" reinforces the distinction between the internal and external loci for "self-expression." The hara is the very personal self -- the internal source of an individual's identity. While the hara is manifested in some aspects of relationships, especially in the very intimate circle of the primary group, it has a limited number of explicit functions in the external world. In this external world, where most of one's life is led, the Japanese do not wear their haras on their sleeves.

B. Social Aspects of the Self

1. The Self and Social Behaviors

To return to the analogy of the bonsai, we may say that the basic organic substance of the tree, its hara character, is evident in each branch, but each branch is also formed into a distinct shape. These shapes are determined by molding, using braces, wrapping and pruning, and each branch is shaped differently depending on its role in the overall composition of the tree. These branches, as aspects of the self, conform to the various contexts an individual inhabits in Japanese society and are shaped by the interplay of influences from the hara and the social environment.

The social environment is seen as extremely salient in a person's life and the validity one receives in this sector is as important as the "given" identity of the hara. The social groups and environments, including family and other primary group relationships, demand certain behaviors and predictable patterns of relating. While it is relationships within the primary group are believed to be based in the binding of haras (hara to hara o awaseru), The primary group relationships do place constraints on the hara and involve a "social" as well as a "personal" self. Such groups correspond to a branch of the bonsai which has experienced less pruning than the others but which still is not completely allowed to grow wild.

The social aspects of self are not seen as a merely superficial overlay or accommodation to social exigencies but are "morally" legitimate in themselves. The independence of the social self and personal hara gives validity to both contexts and protects both selves. The social framework is protected from the battering of individual identities seeking validation and the personal context is protected from unpredictable and uncontrollable social demands. Thus adherence to social standards, and even to the elaborate rituals of behavior demanded in Japanese interactions, does not create a situation where one's social behavior is considered hypocrisy.* On the contrary, the Japanese consider individuals who have not developed the ability to perform appropriately in various social situations despite their personal feelings and motivations as lacking in an important aspect of adult competence.

It is not necessary that a person thrust aside these socially prescribed behaviors to be "an individual." His individuality will be sufficiently expressed in the style which his hara naturally imparts to the performance of these social conventions, and in any case, the goal of social interaction, the smooth functioning of relationships, is strongly valued. Expression of individuality at the expense of the social environment is not approved.

Within the family, or with others with whom a person is intimate, prescriptive social behaviors are less salient, and the hara is more in evidence. In such a situation, the individual is not considered responsible for his hara-based actions, nor is he judged by the characteristics of his hara.

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* Japanese do have a word for hypocrisy, but it does not apply to the observation of normal social ritual.

2. "Anti-social" Behavior

Occasionally a person's hara is such that it causes difficulty in intimate relationships where socially prescriptive behaviors are at a minimum. A person who has a "short ki" for example (short tempered) may cause difficulty in the family by outbursts of temper which upset the others. In a less intimate situation, the prescriptive social behaviors would likely maintain the outbursts within the bounds of correct ettiquette, however, in the family, the individual may feel sufficiently unrestrained as to express himself freely, causing consternation and unhappiness among the family members. In this situation, the person is not to be blamed for his behavior, as the ki with which he is endowed creates the outbursts, rather than a willful action on his part. The individual himself does not perceive his hara or ki as something over which he has personal control. Although the family members may psychologically pressure or exhort the individual to change, or attempt to avoid potentially provocative situations, they will expect the change to come from the individual's voluntarily adopting the prescriptive social controls on emotion displays which are applicable in less intimate situations for use within the family. To the individual himself, this may feel like a rejection of the intimacy of the family to which he has a legitimate right.

Imposing checks on the expression of his hara redefines the family as only a semi-intimate situation, and the individual may feel rejected and unfairly persecuted. If the individual chooses not to accept self-limitations

on the expression of his hara, and continues to express negative emotions freely, the family may simply insulate itself psychologically from the outbursts of temper and hope that with time this aspect of the person's hara will gradually diminish. There is little they can do to directly change the situation.

3. Psychological Disorders

Psychological disorders in Japan are seen more as a problem of social integration than of personal integrity. Although there is a wide range of treatment available, the definitions of the underlying problem usually focus on the patient's lack of social integration. This may not be seen as the root cause of mental illness, but usually establishes the major direction of the therapy. If the root cause of the illness is seen as a basic characterological problem, or a major identity issue, there is little which therapy can do since the hara is seen as given and not susceptible to change or training. A temporary social moratorium for rest and improvement of morale (seen to be a big factor in a cure) is often called for, especially in Morita therapy[49,46] which emphasizes a period of introspective meditation and journal-writing. But since the real goal is social reintegration, the gradual reacclimation of the patient to work and to a group is begun very soon. Advice to women who are suffering from severe emotional stress is often contained in a single word, "gambatte" (be patient and cope) and several therapists have reported cases where a woman unable to "cope" or to remain at her post in the family was divorced by her husband.*

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* Emotional illness or mental retardation in children is seen as an inseparable tragedy and a family shame (as are all birth defects as well) and are often hidden from public view.[55] Even those who were victims of the pollution disease at Minamata, and whose birth defects were publicly known to have been caused by the environmental hazards produced by the Chisso chemical plant were hidden from view and considered a family shame. See Minamata, W. Eugene and Aileen Smith.

Since certain maladjustments are believed to emerge from the hara which is seen as relatively untreatable, and, since Japanese psychotherapy focusses on social reintegration and behaviors in a different arena of the self, there is from a Western point of view, a significant group of psychological disorders which are left untreated. This topic provides a most compelling area for further investigation.

C. Society and Affiliation

The following summary of Japanese society has been drawn from works by many writers, including Chie Nakane,[38] Ezra Vogel,[59] Ruth Benedict,[4] Ronald Dore[14] and Takie Lebra.[32] Nakane characterizes Japanese society as "vertical" (tateshakai) in which the major relationships and axes of influence are hierarchical, based on status deriving from age and/or seniority (as well as from sex in a male-dominated society). However, the loci of actual production and affiliation are the small, horizontally bonded groups where peer ties are the strongest and where work and responsibility are assigned to teams, not to individuals. Thus, while an individual is constrained and tested in his or her relationships with superiors and inferiors in work, school, or other group of strongest allegiance, responsibility is diffuse and a person is relatively free from personal identity testing by performance or abilities. Conversely, the individual is not completely free to express feelings emerging from the "personal self", because the demands of membership, even in these close groups, count the cohesion of the group more important than personal expression. Moveover, since at least ideally a person belongs to only one such primary group, there is not a wide range of options or loci for self-expression as in the West.

1. The "Liege" Group

While Japanese do of course have several groups to which they belong, the total commitment required by their primary group of allegiance -- their "liege" group --[10] prevents people from participating fully in more than one such group. The Japanese group coheres through active, face-to-face relationships, demanding long hours of participation from its members. Other criteria of belonging which are more focussed on product or goal, or center on ideology or on contract are not appropriate to the Japanese individual, who sees his group as a supporting and enspiriting engagement rather than as a locus of competition, individual effort, and fulfillment.

One example of the group as diffusely and totally engaging is the college ski club in Japan. While such a group appears to focus on a sport, like other such "interest groups" it has a much more diffuse function and a very long-range time perspective. The group coheres into a permanent cohort with ties back and forth over generations -- sons and daughters of former members automatically become members in their turn. Relationships are often deep and last throughout one's life. Through these connections, business deals are made, sons or nephews hired and daughters are married, long after the skiing has ended. The group has a seniority system based on year of entry but juniors and seniors (sempai and kohai) treat each other with less formality and greater comraderie than they would in "official" university contexts. The new recruits are initiated each year into the rites

and relationships of the group and there are many excuses for parties. Ideas are generated which seem deliberately to demand much interaction, and Spring, Summer and Fall are as busy as mid-Winter. Frequent and regular meetings, whatever the season or activity, forge the relationships which are the chief focus of these groups. It is no wonder that a Japanese university student is amazed at the long list of club memberships which often follow names in an American college yearbook — what difficulties of time and loyalty conflicts such lists might mean in Japan!

2. Formal and Informal Modes of Social Interaction

In this brief summary of the social context of the self we should also emphasize the contrast between formal and informal modes of social interaction which may exist in any kind of social grouping and which provide periodic releases from the more rigid but predictable patterns of work and hierarchy. The formal mode is characterized by precisely maintained status distinctions between people, which are supported by distinctions of speech and action.* The use of polite language is one marker of a "formal" situation, and another is the tendency of such situations to be less "productive" in "real" communication. Aisatsu, or formal meetings to "greet" a teacher or superior, are understood to be mostly social form. In a more relaxed setting the "real" communication takes place. There seems to be a tendency in a Japanese group to shift, whenever possible, to an informal situation, created and encouraged by both junior and senior members. This allows everyone to

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* The Japanese language contains several levels of speech corresponding not only to the status of the person addressed out more pertinently, to the particular relationship between the speaker and the person addressed. Thus a person uses several different levels every day, indicating that his status is not a permanently abstract ascribed attribute but changes in each relationship.

"let go" -- the more senior, in fact, can let go more than the junior, and there seems to be a real enjoyment on both sides of the senior members' "debasement." At these times, there may be teasing and jesting accusations but there is more likely to be nostalgia, weeping confession of very small (even imagined) misdeeds, and a ritual of very supportive exchange of song performances. These "releases" are not social moratoria or vacations for the hara but rather another social mode into which a group may switch temporarily. While drunkenness gives everyone an excuse to be noisier and more affectionate than usual, one still is under a constraint not to offend. What is called ninjo (human feeling) still operates to bind people together and to make them sensitive to each other. The impulsive behavior (usually fueled or permitted by alcohol) seen during a period of group functioning in the informal mode is not viewed as an expression of individualism but rather as a source of empathic affiliation which ties the group together more closely. The member who cannot attend one of these events feels severely handicapped and isolated, just as the schoolchild who is sick on the day of the class trip will remember at every reunion that he was the one who didn't go.

3. Homogeneity and the Social Self

The feeling of belonging which emerges is based on the premises of likemindedness and predictability of behavior among members of the group. As previously mentioned, the Japanese insist on the idea that their society is a homogeneous one. It is clear that, given the type of cohesion, the long term perspective, and the criteria for membership valued in Japanese groups, the need to perceive society as homogeneous, or at least as predictable, is a useful one. In recruitment for membership in a "permanent" group, preference is given to those who will not stick out too awkwardly. Similarly, because of the need for consensus in Japanese decision-making, groups need to feel that members will at least tend to agree.

Predictability depends on the learning of behaviors and responses which characterize Japanese relationships and social activities. These learned behaviors and responses lie both in the formal and in the informal environments and ensure that, both in terms of production and efficiency and in terms of the warm melding of members, the group will be successful. Japanese "social selves," then, tend towards homogeneity through learned behaviors, for the sake of group coherence, not for the sake of conformity itself.

4. Uniqueness and Affiliation

Along with a social -- and national — interest in projecting a homogeneous image, the Japanese also emphasize the special, untranslateable experience of being Japanese. Thus the apparent uniformity embodied in a Japanese self-description such as "We Japanese are parochial, village people living in a cosmopolitan world," masks, deliberately, a complexity it is both assumed could not be understood by non-Japanese and is ignored by Japanese themselves. There is a preference for explanations using "Japanese" environment or history -- the three hundred years of seclusion and the island topology are considered to be critically important, for example. Also, Japanese give racial uniqueness as explanation, as in T. Shinoda's Nihonjin no Nō[53] where the Japanese lack of ability in foreign languages is attributed to a basic difference in the way the Japanese brain hears human speech. Uniqueness as a principle seems to remain at the level of the nation and the group: it is a device for cohesion and affiliation rather than a device for individualization.

5. Honne and Tatemae

Learned behaviors (tatemae) serve as social lubricant, but more importantly define a social role. Some Japanese, especially those who have lived in the West, decry the niceties of Japanese etiquette as time-consuming and hypocritical. Yet a typical Japanese does not see his own social behaviors in this way, but considers them highly appropriate and useful and would feel awkward and vulnerable without them; he would have lost the only prescribed method of interaction in formal situations. Moreover, any other social-behavior might be improper and hurtful to others and thus "immoral."

The contrast between honne and tatemae (core reality versus surface manifestations or behaviors) is used in many contexts, but, except for a few instances (such as political corruption where the existence of the tatemae corruption is acknowledged but condemned) the distinction is not seen to be a morally critical one. Honne and tatemae does not typically represent a contrast between the true self and the false social environment. Rather, honne/tatemae distinctions exist primarily in the social environment, (the honne serving as a base-line check on the rampant accumulation of superficial layers of polite behavior). Thus, honne are the real feelings between people, the reality of a relationship, the actual history behind a story only partly known. Honne doesn't necessarily refer to a person's own core self (hara)or motivations. Nor does the honne/tatemae distinction

indicate tension, falsification or "cover-up." This kind of contrast represents a useful accommodation between what *is* and what is *convenient* to use or know, rather than a struggle to hide or reveal "the truth."

Children are taught to use *tatemae* behaviors in order to respond sensitively to the needs and feelings of others, needs and feelings which are not displayed directly -- one guesses through context and very subtle hints what another's mood is, for active or explicit statements or requests are rarely made. The *public* communication is *tatemae* (formal prescribed behavior) rather than direct demands: the *honne*, like the *hara*, must be intuited. It is assumed that because the clues are universally understood, the mood will be as well, but because no *direct* request has been made, there will be less embarassment and no lasting harm to the relationship if the unstated request isn't met. Prescriptive behaviors (*tatemae*) thus paradoxically allow some freedom by allowing several interpretations of the *honne* to exist even while social forms must be rigidly observed. The *honne/tatemae* distinction permits the *hara*-self to retain its nature and characteristics intact while the social self, moving between *tatemae* and *honne* in its negotiations in the external world, can change to suit conditions without damage to a person's basic feeling of integrity. Thus what Westerners have called "situationalism" in Japanese behavior is actually an accommodation between principle and reality which allows for a closer approximation, over the long run, to the demands of principle. In this way, the universal acceptance of the *honne/tatemae* distinction has also produced a very stable and well-integrated society, however conservative its social forms may appear.

6. The Dual Society

Another way of perceiving the social context for the self in Japan is to see it as made up of two socially validated, functional modes expressed in social relationships and learning environments. These modal types, one hierarchical, rigid and demanding, the other egalitarian, flexible and accepting, exist in complementary relationship throughout society. The first, which might be called (after Nakane) the tateshakai or vertical model is noted by a tough, unlinear life path, where an individual has a one-time-only chance at success. This structure encourages a strict regimen of hard work and tough competition, and is epitomized in the severe discipline of examination study. But because, as we have seen, one's achievements and abilities are seen as separate from one's most intimate personal identity, what Westerners would consider a very ego-threatening situation does not occur. When the strain of the selection system does produce a psychologically difficult situation for the individual, as shown in the examination period suicides, the Japanese consider that the person's hara has been inappropriately involved and that a pathological merging of personal and social identities has taken place.

The other aspect of the Japanese social environment is what Kawai Hayao[27] has called its "maternal egalitarianism." By this is meant that relationships, and the values of social organization are based upon trust that fairness (without damaging regard for abilities) will rule the distribution of "goods." Employer-employee, teacher-student and parent-child

relationships are all based in the understanding that if one plays one's appropriate role in the framework of loyalty, obligation, benevolence and reciprocity, every person will receive a fair portion of the benefits of society. The confident trust that one's turn will come, and an ability to be patient through the waiting period stems from a dependent orientation toward one's place in the group.

Doi describes amae (placing oneself in a position of dependency) as a basic psychological drive but there is some confusion here between the Western sense of "drive" as part of a person's basic individual psychological makeup and the Japanese definition of dependency as an important principle underlying relationships and thus part of a "social" self, rather than part of the hara. The encouragement of amae in small children will be treated later in the discussion of the maternal child-rearing process.

Americans in Japan often feel tension and anxiety over exhibiting dependency needs and having them met.[57] For them, dependency is valid neither in the personal nor in the social frame, but is appropriate only to a very restricted period of life — infancy — and to certain specific situations, like illness. The Japanese, without a strong ideology of the value of independence, and with a different organization of the functions of what we call the "self," have a place for this dependency throughout the life cycle. The great value placed on the social frame and thus on the devices which bind people within it encourages the development of appropriate dependecy bonds. These bonds are social rather than personal and are at least in part, trained rather than innate.

7. Case: Competition vs. Amae in the Educational System

An example of the complementary relationship between the struggle to achieve and the egalitarian benevolence of society can be seen in the bifurcation of the contemporary educational system in Japan.* On the one hand, one observes the indulgent fairness of the regular classroom, where no one is held back or advanced from his or her age group, where differences in ability are minimized and harmony emphasized. On the other hand, we see a striking contrast in the rigors of the after-school cram classes (juku) where a relentless drill teacher may bully and shame students into working their hardest and where differences in progress are carefully pointed out. It is no wonder that the ranjuku jidai (period of run-away juku) is creating public controversy. Complementarity is in this case becoming too compartmentalized and many parents and teachers see the current situation of Japanese education as a pathological split.[60]

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* The educational system will be discussed in greater detail in Section Three, Learning in the Schools.

These remarks on the nature of self and society in Japan have focussed on Japanese definitions and have attempted to establish a framework through which a Western observer might understand the relationship between the individual and his social framework in Japan. This analysis of the ascription of abilities and learning to a specific arena of the self in Japan is important to our understanding of how individual potential is realized and how the "location" of self in society influences the playing out of individual abilities.

III. CASES OF LEARNING IN JAPANESE SOCIETY

In the following section, we will describe some situations where learning takes place in Japanese society. These learning situations demonstrate how the concepts of the self and the process of the development of abilities are applied to the problems of the development of human potential. Although the Japanese do not consider that the hara, or basic self, is substantially changed by the development of various abilities, Japanese society and individuals are greatly concerned with the proper nurturance and demonstration of their abilities. While the hara may define an individual to himself and to those with whom he is intimate, a person's abilities define him in the very important social sphere. Abilities are the aspect of the individual which undergoes some of the most important testing in the assignment of comfortable and respected positions in the society. Despite these strong forces urging the nurturance of abilities to very high levels, training is typically effected in a manner which does not do violence to the basic hara or self. This separation of the hara from the training of abilities is evident in the structuring of learning situations.

The first example of a social learning situation is that of the maternal childrearing process. This is the first and most psychologically intense learning situation, and it imparts many of the basic attitudes upon which the Japanese concept of the self and the development of abilities are predicated. The second example is that of the teaching of traditional

art forms. Learning in this situation gives us a view of traditional Japanese approaches to teaching and learning which predated Western influences and which have been consciously preserved intact. The influence of a long history of these traditional training methods have contributed to the way in which the imported modern school system was modified to suit Japanese objectives and style. The formal school system is also very important as an agent of socialization and training, as almost all Japanese children spend twelve years in daily attendance (currently 93% of all students complete high school.)[17] The influence of the schools is made stronger by the desire of a majority of Japanese to do well in school and to thereby attain a favored position within society.

Finally, in the training in and for the workplace, the Japanese youth receives the finishing touches on his education which transforms him into an adult. For men, the company is the institution in which they will spend most of their adult waking hours, and with which they develop a very deep affiliation. The process of developing this affiliation in young men has interesting suggestions for the meaning and process of membership in Japanese society, and for the meaning of abilities and productivity as identifying characteristics of Japanese people.

A. The Maternal Child-rearing Process

The goals of the Japanese mother in the socialization of her child during the preschool years are to give the child a secure emotional base in the home and in the relationship with the mother, to develop basic social and interpersonal competency, and to awaken the child's learning abilities for future development under the direction of teachers and other tutors. The relationship of the mother and child is extremely close, both physically and emotionally, to the point where the mother treats the child almost as an extension of herself. She sleeps and bathes with her child, and frequently holds him or carries him on her back.[6] Until the child enters preschool at the age of four or five, it is rare for the child to be away from his mother. Babysitters are almost unknown, and the definition of a good mother includes the constancy of her attention to the child. Such close physical proximity gives the mother a chance to develop an intuitive understanding of her child's character and behavior, and to be always at hand to teach and mold him.

In developing emotional bonds, Japanese mothers encourage their children to display dependency needs and they meet and fulfill these needs unquestioningly.[12] The dependence of the child on the mother becomes one of the primary themes around which the relationship revolves. The mother perceives her child as born an independent being, in need of developing interdependence with others. This interdependence is the stuff of which relationships, especially intimate ones, are made. By reinforcing and

encouraging the child's use of amae to express his feelings in the intimate relationship of the family, the child comes to perceive it as the primary means of emotional expressiveness in future intimate relationships. The child's natural dependence on the mother becomes institutionalized as a means of expression in primary relationships.

The mother devotes herself to developing an intuitive understanding of the wishes and desires of her child. She understands the feelings of the child's hara and fulfills them without expecting the child to verbalize his desires. She responds to his unexpressed signals and encourages his reading of her cues as well, thus creating an atmosphere of mutual sensitivity to mood and subtle body language. The child is constantly taught to avoid situations in which he causes trouble or discomfort for others (meiwaku wo kakeru). This encourages the child to reflect upon the consequences of his actions for others, as well as to expect from them the same kind of consideration. The result of this training is the development of a sensitivity and inclination to respond to the subtle mood states of others.

Although the mother is not seen as responsible for the characteristics of her child's hara (which are seen as innate), the mother has an important responsibility in setting the tone of the home which may influence the child's hara in subtle ways. She has great responsibility for training the child in the ways of interpersonal relationships, using their own relationship as a model. Developing in the child dependency needs, the ability to reciprocate those needs, and an ability to read subtle emotional

cues to others' moods is her task, and it is seen as an important one.

In the teaching process, the mother attempts at all times to avoid open confrontation with the child. By constantly repeating her requests with enthusiasm and support for the child's successes, she encourages the child a step at a time down the path toward her goals for him. The expression "Haeba tate tateba ayumi no oyagokoro" (if he crawls encourage him to stand; if he stands, have him walk -- such is the wish of a parent) indicates the mother's constant goal-setting strategy. If the child rebels, she moves to protect the relationship with the child, rather than forcing the issue at the expense of alienating the child. In this way she trains him both to the style of interpersonal behavior valued by herself and society at large, but also to the daily tasks which he needs to accomplish to become responsible for himself, such as brushing his teeth or dressing himself. The child is not confronted with inflexible demands, but with constant suggestion and encouragement and an unworried expectation that the child will eventually conform.

The mother is considered responsible for germinating the seed of her child's abilities. Although once the child's seed of ability in sports, reading and writing, social behavior, or any other desired ability, has sprouted, the child is given over to the tutelage of another teacher, the school teacher, or any one of a number of private lesson teachers. The mother, however, is responsible for continuing to water the growing plant and is under considerable peer pressure from other mothers to be sure that her child does not fall too far behind in his development of abilities.[59]

In the end, it is she who is responsible for the child's abilities, although she shares the teaching responsibility with others.

In an attempt to ensure that their children will keep up with their peers in the development of abilities, and to lay the groundwork for a later successful school career, most mothers train the child during the preschool years in school-related studies. The gradual shift of emphasis from the mother's role in encouraging 'good breeding' (shitsuke) to an emphasis on home training in preparation for school (yōji kyoiku) has been noted. Most mothers (especially in urban areas) teach their children to read and write the phonetic alphabet, and most children can count to one hundred, and work simple addition and subtraction story problems involving amounts under ten before they reach first grade. Most preschools do not systematically teach these abilities, and it is largely due to the efforts of the mother that the children develop these abilities before they enter school.* During the preschool years, most urban middle-class children attend some type of private lesson besides their preschool. These lessons are usually not focussed on academic subjects and the choice of lessons is often influenced by fads. The purpose of the lessons is basically that of enrichment, and some of those which are currently most popular are music lessons, drawing and painting, English, and swimming. The responsibility for early training falls on the mother, and her role in nurturing the development of her child's abilities is greatly stressed.

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* There are, however, pre-school juku which aim at developing academic skills to help the children pass examinations into private kindergartens and elementary schools. The attendance at these schools is limited to a very small part of the urban population.

The psychodynamics by which the mother carries out her awesome responsibilities hinge upon the development of an emotional closeness between the mother and child in which the child needs the mother to indulge the amae which has been nurtured and encouraged in the relationship. In addition, the mother has trained the child to be sensitive to the moods of others, and to avoid causing trouble and unhappiness. By gauging her demands for more mature behavior on the child's part to the ability of the child to fulfill them, and by showing that she is hurt and threatening withdrawal of affection when the child refuses to fulfill the demands, the mother is gradually able to shape the child's behavior in the direction of greater maturity. As mentioned earlier, if the child flatly refuses to go along with the mother's suggestions, the mother typically backs down, and while displaying her hurt, reaffirms the emotional bond with the child. The mother will continue to look for the opportune time to reassert her desires, however, and is confident that through her understanding of the child's hara, she will triumph in the end. Although describing the mother's manipulation of the psychodynamics of this relationship makes her sound extremely Machiavellian, the majority of mothers are not overtly conscious of their psychological methods, and do not feel in any case that there is anything underhanded about them. On the contrary, they feel that this method is the most natural and supportive of the child. (Outside observers also feel that the long-range perspective and the patient child-focussed socialization methods are probably less 'damaging' or 'manipulative' than the techniques used in other cultures, including our own.)

B. Training in the Traditional Arts

The training of students in traditional Japanese arts forms embodies special characteristics of the training process which are directly linked to the indigenous concepts of the self and the psychology of learning discussed earlier in the report. These training methods are interesting because tradition has preserved much of them intact from earlier periods of Japanese history, before the advent of Western schooling and psychologies. These traditional art forms include, among others, tea ceremony, flower arrangement, traditional music and dance, and the martial arts. As the media used in each of the forms are substantially different, each art form differs somewhat from the others, however, the basic principles described below are true for all of the art forms.

The goal of these traditional trainings was ideally to attain inner harmony and peace for the hara through the influence of prolonged contact with the art form. Practically, they have become avenues for the acquisition of a skill which is considered an asset to the credentials of a prospective bride,* and interesting as a hobby for those with leisure time. Although the focus on a meditative quest for spiritual peace and harmony has been supplanted by an emphasis on these art forms as social graces, the teaching methods and the psychology of learning which can be deduced from them still have relevance for modern-day Japan.

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* The fact of attendance at the lessons, not the skill acquired, often produces the credential in this case.

In these traditional art forms, the student acquires knowledge by imitation of the teacher's actions through diligent, unquestioning repetition. The teaching methods used typically center in physical demonstrations rather than verbal explanations. Where the medium under study allows it, the teacher literally walks the student through the behavior expected of him or her, and the student learns by imitating the movements of the teacher, and later continuing to practice them on his own. Students move through a carefully structured series of ability levels, with the requirements for completing each level specified and tested, and the student being certified as having reached a certain level. Correct performance of each of the steps is exemplified by the performance of the master who is at the apex of the pyramid of ability levels. Rather than an absolute, abstract model of perfection, the master's personal style and direction represent the model. Thus the students of a particular teacher learn <u>his</u> style which they may later modify, instead of a set of principles from which they create their own styles from the beginning.

Ideally, by the example of the master and by contact with him as an embodiment of the centered, harmonious nature of the skill, the student's <u>hara</u> gradually emulates the <u>hara</u> of the teacher as representative of the form. This is facilitated by healthy concentration and the 'natural discipline' imposed by the nature of the exercises of the craft itself. This process occurs not through simple imitation of the teacher's style, as it may be interpreted in the West, but a gradual development of the ability to share in the experience of the teacher's relationship to the art form,

through emulating as closely as possible the physical actions of the teacher.

Some may learn faster than others, but the assumption is that all can learn to perform the art gracefully and proficiently. The important variable in the learning process is diligence and hard work and careful attention to detail. The teacher is respected and revered as an authority on the matter to be learned, and his or her wisdom and preferred methods of imparting that wisdom are not to be questioned. As the student must try to sense the teacher's experience of the art form, his role is passively to absorb the lessons, with a sensitive and open hara, rather than to impose his own cognitive structure and choice on them. Imitation and study of relevant examples is the basic didactic method, and the student is discouraged from raising questions. Such questioning, even for purposes of securing an explanation, is considered rude and unnecessary. The student is encouraged to meet the teacher with his heart and intuition, rather than with an actively questioning mind. Although the progress the student makes is couched in terms of an individual quest for spiritual improvement, this aspect of the training is not specifically discussed, and lessons focus exclusively on the practical problems of learning the skill. The spiritual aspect of the learning process is assumed to be absorbed by osmosis from the learning context. As we will see, the psychology of learning which is embodied in this type of training is also apparent in the system of formal schooling which is a much larger part of the learning experience of the average Japanese.

C. Learning in the Schools

School is perhaps the most ability-oriented learning situation in Japanese culture. The goal of this training is not the molding of the hara,* but inculcation of academic and social abilities.** The goals of the learning process can be divided into two categories: those goals which are formally espoused by the educational system and approved by the Ministry of Education, and those to which the children's parents subscribe. The formal goals include the development of the basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematics, so that all children can become informed and productive citizens. In addition to this, the educational system desires to train the child in the forms of social interaction and group behavior which are integral to participation in society. Furthermore, education includes the development of a national consciousness and identity as a Japanese. For some parents, the primary goal for their children is to have them perform well in school in the expectation that this will help them find a comfortable and respected place in society. For other parents, the emphasis is on social mobility, and they attempt to help their child win a place in a prestigious university, in the expectation that the child will be able to enter the elite track in society.***

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* Even the classes which teach ethics (shusshin), strive to teach the children social norms and behaviors, rather than attempting to effect a change in the children's basic character.

** Ronald Dore, in a critical study of the Japanese school system, suggests that the educational system in Japan tends to emphasize the construction of social ties and the production of credentialled graduates, rather than the imparting of knowledge. This is perhaps an overstatement..

*** Because at least in theory, a parent's status must be re-earned by the child and cannot be inherited, the "meritocracy" demands that each generation be tested and sorted.

The characteristics of the learning process as it occurs in the schools centers around fast-paced presentation of academic material which is aimed at the better than average students in the class. This presentation speed is predicated on intensive work outside of class time. This back-up work comes from three sources. The child himself is expected to do several hours of homework a night beginning in the upper elementary grades, and this expands to five or six hours a night by high school. The mother is expected to give the child extensive support, studying the same material as the child (especially during the elementary grades) and quizzing him on his lessons, bringing snacks, and keeping him company as he studies.* Home tutors (katei kyoshi) are also employed if a child is having trouble in a subject. There are two types of supplementary education for children who begin to fall behind the pace of the classroom. There are private remedial classes (gakushu juku), and for those who can work at or ahead of the classroom pace and who hope for entrance to a good university, there are cram classes for preparation for examinations (shingaku juku). In the non-remedial classes, the child learns more advanced material so as to have an advantage over children who study only the regular curriculum.

Ninety-five percent of Japanese children enter high school, and because high school is not part of the compulsory education system, children

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* A best-selling home-study desk for children is surrounded on three sides by shelves and equipment, shielding the child from distraction. At the front, is a dash-board-like arrangement of lights, an electric pencil sharpener, and a built in calculator. At the right-hand side is a button connected to a bell to be mounted in the kitchen, for the child to summon his mother for help or for a snack.

are examined for entrance to public or private high schools. Although this is a very important time in the determination of a child's future educational couse, the pressure is much greater at the time of the university entrance exams. Approximately 65% of high school students do not enter the university, and these students usually relax their pace of study somewhat during their high school years, attend fewer juku, and often allow the pace of the classroom curriculum to overtake and pass them.

In contrast to the demanding emphasis on the development of academic abilities in individuals, the criteria for membership in the classroom group are explicitly not linked to abilities. The child is accepted for the person that he is, irrespective of the level of his academic abilities. Children are neither failed nor skipped, and a child can be sure of an unquestioned place in the "primary group" of his classmates who stay together as a cohort through middle school at least, despite the level of his academic abilities. These contrasting characteristics of the system have been termed a hard/soft bifurcation[60] with the public school classroom itself a "soft" environment characterized by non-critical support and harmony and the after-school cram classes as the "hard" aspect of the system, where the children are drilled intensively to prepare them for the examinations.*

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* The classroom teacher has lost an important function because of this bifurcation. Until recently he or she acted as link between school and family, to keep parents abreast of their child's progress and to give advice on applications for future schools. Now that the juku teacher (with less time and no overall perspective on the child) monitors his progress, the regular teacher is often at a loss to help the parents.

Correct social behaviors are another type of ability which children are expected to learn at school. The practice of working together in teams is taught through many hours of experience as a member of a small group responsible for both a particular task and the behavior of the other members in the group. Smooth interpersonal relations and proper respect behavior, especially proper forms of address, are also part of the teaching agenda. Proper social behavior is not seen as a gift which only well-adjusted children can be expected to have; it is an ability which every child can and must attain through careful observation of the classroom rules and the teacher's guidance.

While certain aspects of the training in traditional art forms persist in the modern Japanese school system, the focus on the role of imitation and example has been replaced by conceptual understanding growing out of rote memorization. The teacher is no longer a role model to be followed with 'heart and soul', but a dispenser of information and a coach emphasizing diligence and correct study habits. Student questioning of the teacher is more common than in traditional forms of education, but it is still not the major mode of interaction.

The psychodynamics of the school learning situation are made complex by the parental goals of securing a comfortable and, for some parents, an elite lifestyle through the medium of the school system. The desire of many parents to have their child perform sufficiently well on examinations to enter a prestigious university has encouraged attempts to give their

children an edge in the competition by sending him to juku in addition to the school-assigned work. This has created a situation of artificial inflation of the level of preparation for examinations. Enough children receive juku preparation (86% over elementary school age and over 90% at high school age) that the top universities now practically require extensive, time-consuming, and costly extra training for a realistic chance at entrance.[52] The attempt to get an edge on the system has also created a phenomenon whereby parents attempt to enter their children in prestigious nursery schools with a good reputation, so that the children will have a good chance at the best elementary schools, and so on, eventually to have a good chance to move from the best high schools to a good university. This downward extension of the examination pressure has created strain on parents and young children alike, especially in those families for whom education-mediated social mobility is important.

In fairness to the parents, most of them deplore the system but understand that given the current situation, they have little choice but to comply with it. The alternative is to refuse to subject their child to the pressure, and in so doing severely limit his chances for academic or career success. The system is said to be out of control,* and although there is extensive social recognition of the fact, it is very difficult to change the situation. In fact, the parents often raise the most conservative

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* As in the expression, ranjuku jidai (or "the period of rampant or runaway juku".)

voices in opposition to change, since although they intensely dislike the current situation, they worry that any radical changes would make their own child's chances uncertain.

Mothers who have decided not to buck the system, and who hope for academic success for their children must somehow encourage their child to study very hard every day after school. Psychologically this is accomplished by the mother allying with her child (and the child's teacher) against the system.[28,60] Together they work as hard as possible to defeat the test. Mothers encourage their children to study for their own good, helping them as much as possible, and assuming some of the psychological burden of preparation. If the child is recalcitrant, the mother encourages him by using his desire to please her to suggest that he study harder in response to her obvious support and effort. The teacher and the mother consult together on the best methods to help the child, and the child comes to view those in his primary group as on his side, rather than against him. The child is also encouraged to internalize the goal of doing well on the exams, and to work not only to please his mother and teacher, but also for the pleasure of his own excellent performance. If the child does not do as well as he wishes, however, he is spared the feeling that the failure was his fault, or that he is somehow inferior to those who were accepted. The examination measures only abilities, not the child's real self, and so, despite failure the child's identity remains unscathed. The support and active assistance of the mother and teacher also deflect some of the responsibility from the child, since he can feel that many people worked together to help prepare him for the

examination. A failure is, however, keenly felt by the mother who will often sequester herself at home for weeks afterwards, ashamed to meet other mothers.

It should be emphasized, however, that not all Japanese parents are equally keen on having their children enter a prestigious university. Although the pattern sketched above holds true for most urban middle class parents, there are many parents in Japan who do not fit this pattern. The views of these parents are typically unreported in discussions of parents' attitudes toward schooling for their children, and the precise nature of their opinions remains to be explored.

D. Training in the Workplace

One of the differences between the Japanese and American systems of employment is the nature and extent of training received by Japanese employees. Men employed in white-collar business and administrative positions (salarymen) typically are given six weeks to six months of special training before they begin their actual work. This special training attempts to teach the specific abilities needed in the future job, to encourage the personality characteristics desired by the company, and to create a cohort of loyal and committed workers. The prototype of training outlined below is extracted from the literature on the training of male salarymen,[50,8,9] and although little is known concerning the situation of women and blue-collar workers, it is likely that the process is basically similar, although less time-consuming and intense.

Among the goals of this training is the creation of a new group identity for the young university or high school graduate recruit. This is the final stage in a person's training for adulthood; he is expected to lose his childish self-centeredness, to learn to seek and accept responsibility, and to adopt adult behavior. To accomplish this, the training program must focus on the teaching of social abilities, appropriate to the new adult, such as proper dress, language, and manners, as well as on the training of practical and interpersonal skills which will be needed in the new job. In addition, the training serves as the beginning of the process of redirecting the energies of the <u>hara</u> towards a focus more appropriate to an adult and a company member.

Recruits are selected by their academic qualifications and often by the prior connections between their university and the company. The personality of the recruit is also important and its appropriateness to the tone of the company is judged during interviews and through investigation of his family. All recruits live together for the duration of the training period in a special facility, usually removed from the company workplace. As an isolated cohort, they live, sleep, study, and relax together, participating in an active round of classes and lectures, practical training in a temporary work group, and often, meditative training and spiritual exercises. The main goal of this period of isolated training is not to train the practical skills which will be used in the workplace (this is mostly the province of later on-the-job training), but to develop in the recruit a new identity as a member of the company and his cohort, a new sense of adulthood, and to weaken his psychological ties with his childhood past.

This change is accomplished psychologically by a sort of identity conversion termed tenko.[35] The final separation from childhood and the beginning of one's new role as an adult is also the time for the learning of many new forms of social behavior. These new social roles and abilities do not in themselves change the hara, but rather provide the recruit with a basis for a new social identity as an adult. He is also encouraged to adopt this new identity whole-heartedly since it underlies his membership in a new, permanent primary group with which he expects to remain until his retirement. Although the new recruit emerges from the training with a new set of behaviors and code of conduct, the corresponding changes in the

hara have only begun to take effect. Changes in the hara are effected slowly, and although the company training experience may encourage a new loyalty and embeddedness in the company, employees never feel that they are at the depth of their haras, identical 'economic animals' in identical blue suits. Although long experience in the same company has a homogenizing effect on its employees, each person retains an individual and unique hara.

It takes several years before the individual truly accepts for himself the new company and adult identity. Evidence of this is the almost universal crisis which occurs two to five years after joining the company, when most individuals think seriously of leaving. This is the final stage of the acceptance of the new identity. Although a few recruits do leave at this stage, most elect to stay, and the crisis passes with a new acceptance of their role.

Thus, the change in group identification which occurs when joining a company does not change the characteristics of a person's hara. The hara is the self which is constant despite changing group affiliations, providing a continuity of self throughout various affiliations. Identification with a particular group may make one's hara more susceptible to the influences of the group, and therefore facilitate slow change in the direction of group norms, but it does not directly change the hara. In Japan, one's innermost self remains distinct from the groups with which the individual is affiliated.

As part of his new identity, the new recruit changes the focus of

his primary group membership from his family of origin to the company. The company itself becomes his parents, the other workers in the work team his siblings. Through the often infantilizing experiences they share during the training period, the cohort is given a "childhood" background common to all other members of the company, and the situation of the training period forces the new recruits to turn to each other for support. Although some characteristics of this process of changing the individual's identity are shared with adult initiation rites in many other societies, their effect in Japan is to create an <u>individual</u> who is also a dedicated and enthusiastic member of a long-term primary group.

IV. THE LIFE CYCLE IN JAPAN

The following section will present an idealized sketch of the life cycle in Japan, focusing on the responsibilities and type of social embeddedness characteristic of each stage of the life cycle. Although this idealization obscures the substantial variation which exists in Japanese society, as was earlier noted such idealized norms have considerable power in Japan, constituting an important source of identity and cohesion and support for the notion of "we-Japanese." After a brief presentation of the normative model for each stage of the life cycle, some of the variations by sex, social class, and historical cohort will be indicated. To do justice to the characteristics of even the model for stages of life, let alone the problem of careful consideration of deviations from this norm, is a major undertaking. We can only indicate here the general outlines of the self and the individual's relationship to the social context presented in the earlier sections.

A. Infancy (0-2 years)

Infancy is the period in the Japanese life cycle when the individual enjoys the greatest freedom and the fewest responsibilities. Social embeddedness is almost entirely within the family, where the mother devotes herself to the child's care, indulging his desires, and making few demands in return. The child spends very little time away from the mother, and a very close emotional relationship is established, in which the child and the mother are highly sensitive to each other's moods and desires.* Gradually, the mother begins to train the child in a few social behaviors, toilet training and greetings being among the earliest taught. Toilet training is gradually achieved: the mother sensitizes herself sufficiently to the child's moods that she can detect his needs and assist him with the responsibility of using the toilet. Children are typically trained before or by the age of two, often by the age of one year. There is also evidence that emotional expressiveness and physical activity on the part of Japanese infants is less rewarded by parents than is the case in the United States.[6] Because of the high sensitivity of the mother to the child's needs, and because the child's needs are met very quickly, there is less need for the child to develop patterns of highly active signalling or overt emotional expressiveness to get the mother's attention. These factors contribute to slightly less active and emotionally labile children during the early childhood and preschool years.

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* See Section III, Maternal Child-Rearing Process

The pattern described above varies slightly by sex, parental occupation, and age cohort. Boys are likely to be more completely indulged than their sisters, and the training of their social behavior receives less emphasis. While the wives of salarymen have few role demands other than caring for the home and child, and so have more time to spend with their children, the wives of farmers and shop owners often have work responsibilities outisde the home. In addition, the latter families are more likely to include grandparents, indicating that the child has a greater chance of spending a substantial amount of time being cared for by the grandmother. During the childhood of the cohort who were children during the 1930s and before, sibling caretakers were common, and mothers were much more likely to be heavily engaged in farm work, restricting the amount of time that they had with their infants.

B. Childhood (2-7 years)

During the period of childhood, the child's responsibility for his own behavior gradually begins to increase. The training of social behaviors which began during infancy is intensified, and a child is expected to learn to comport himself well in public and to use consideration for the feelings of the others in the family, especially the mother. Rather than simply exhibiting his own desires and expecting to have them automatically fulfilled, the child must now begin to respond to the desires of others. The emotionally close relationship with the mother and primary embeddedness in the family is continued throughout this period, and the child's horizons broaden to include preschool and a group of friends who live in the same neighborhood or apartment complex. Helping the child learn to play smoothly with these children is an important responsibility of the mother, and in urban areas, groups of mothers can be seen standing and talking as they supervise their children's play.

Many Japanese children attend nursery school,* which is seen as a preparation for school attendance. The goals of the preschool are to teach the child to act independently of ther mother, to interact with other children, and to observe classroom discipline. Although most preschools

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* Approximately 65% of all six year olds, 50% of four year olds, and 7% of all three year olds attend either preschools or day care centers.

are essentially play oriented, the curriculum does attempt to broaden the child's horizons and to teach basic respect behavior. Although some preschools teach reading and writing as well as fundamental number concepts, this is considered basically the province of the home. Most mothers teach their children the elementary stages of reading and writing, as well as basic numbers, and few children enter first grade who do not know how to hold a pencil correctly and write their name in Chinese characters. Many children are also enrolled in private lessons in sports, music, or English, mostly as a source of enrichment.

The major psychological issue with which children of this age must deal is the acceptance of delayed gratification and the occasional subordination of their own desires to those of other people. The child learns to be away from his mother for short periods of time, and begins to shift the primary focus of his activities from the mother to the peer group. Boys are allowed more latitude than girls, however, and are considered less well socialized throughout the preschool period.*

The wives of urban salarymen are more likely than other mothers to place special emphasis on academic preparation, and their children typically begin preschool earlier, are busier with after school lessons,

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* Observations of children travelling on subway trains with their mothers makes this clear: the girls sit primly, hands on laps, while boys climb all over their mothers desperately grabbing at their shoes to prevent them from soiling the seat.

and also learn more academic fundamentals at home. The children of shop owners and farmers are notoriously less well supervised, as their mothers are busy with the demands of the shop or the farm. Children growing up in rural areas are also less likely to go to preschool, or to enter it at a later age. Fewer children in the cohort of people who spent their childhood during the 1930s went to preschool, and they experienced much less academic preparation during the childhood years.

C. School Age (7-18 years)

During the school age period, demands and responsibilities become substantially heavier. At school, the child is confronted with a rapidly-paced curriculum presentation which requires considerable out-of-school study to prevent them from falling behind. Besides homework, most children attend after-school classes (juku) to help them with their school work. Their study schedules become more and more demanding as the child nears the high school and university entrance examinations. School children of all ages do at least two hours of homework a night, and high school students studying for the entrance examinations typically spend at least six hours or more in preparation at home.*

The peer groups becomes very important to the child during this period. Time spent with friends (usually of the same sex), and extra-curricular clubs and activities are very important to the child, and although the child's study schedule precludes his being able to spend all of his after-school hours with his friends, most children prefer this to study. In middle-class urban neighborhoods, however, so many children attend juku that the ones who don't often beg their parents to allow them to attend, since there is no one to play with. During high school, students have occasional dates, and outings with a mixed group are added to time spent with same-sex friends. At home, the child becomes less involved with his

* The environment of the school is treated more fully in Section II.

family, using home as a place to eat, sleep, and study, and prefering to spend free time outside with his friends. Most children of school age have virtually no responsibilities for housework at home, and mothers prefer to preserve the child's time as much as possible for study, and do not mind the child's dependence on them. Few high school children of either sex can prepare a meal or clean the house by themselves, and few are asked to perform these tasks.

Psychologically, the school years are a time of concern over one's relationships with one's peers, and the testing of one's academic abilities in relation to other students. Although there is mutual support rather than competition between students in the same classroom, all children in Japan are in fact in competition for entrance to good high schools and universities and the higher in the pyramidal hierarchy of universities one aspires, the more competition is felt. The extent to which the family is concerned with the child's entering a good university also determines the amount of pressure felt by the child. Although placement in the academic hierarchy is not a determinant of the worth of the child's basic self, and few children who do not attain their goal suffer severe psychological damage, the pressure to study and the "campaign mood" of examination-time ensures that the child has an active concern for academic achievement.

Boys are typically allowed more freedom to move about with their peers during this period, and girls are more likely to be required to keep 'proper hours' and to be discouraged from associating with 'improper' friends.

Girls are also not encouraged to study quite as hard as boys, and fewer resources are likely to be expended in juku and private tutors for them. Although many parents hope that their daughters do go to college, the college years are seen more as qualification for a good marriage than as a necessity to secure a good job and financial security. Moreover, entrance to "too good" a coeducational university may be seen as detrimental to a girl's chances of getting an appropriate husband.

The school years are quite similar for children of salarymen, shopkeepers, and farmers. As children are not asked to participate in the work of the family or home, most of their time is either spent with the peer group, in school, or in study, and the influence of the parent's style of life is felt somewhat less. Children from urban areas, and especially children of salarymen are more likely to have parents with strong expectations for their academic success, and therefore may be expected to study harder. Those children who do not anticipate going to the university typically do not study very seriously during these years, and the pressure to do well on examinations is not felt very strongly by them.

The cohort of children who went to school before the war were under much less pressure academically, as social mobility by means of the school system was not such a common goal. In farming families, agricultural labor was much less mechanized, and school children were expected to help on the farm. Agriculture and family businesses were more able to support those children who desired to remain at home, and the business

world and government bureaucracies were less able to accept all academically able students. A much smaller percentage of children attended high school, and academic achievement was less of a social sorting device than it is at the present time. Children who attended school during the war years suffered from many privations in the form of relocation to the countryside and temporary placement away from their families, lack of resources for enrichment, and often a shortage of food.[19]

D. The Working Years

The time spent in the workplace has very different characteristics for men and women. Especially in factories and corporations, men usually begin work upon leaving school and continue until retirement at age 55 or 60. Women begin work after leaving school, but either quit or are fired upon marriage or the birth of their first child. Role demands and responsibilities differ somewhat for the two sexes, but the basic components are the same. As new adults, they are expected to modify their dress and behavior to adult standards, and seek and accept responsibility for membership in a work group and for their part in completing tasks. In the company, they are expected to work hard and enthusiastically, and to accept requests for overtime work willingly. After hours, they must socialize with fellow workers to build the cohesion and morale of the work group.

For men, the company is the place where they expect to spend most of their waking hours until they retire. Their membership in the company and the work they perform becomes an important source of identity and means of validating their personal worth. Although women are expected to work responsibly, they are not expected to undergo an identity change in the same way that the men are. The jobs that they perform are lower level, and do not lead into a long term future with the company. Socializing with company mates is important for both men and women, but the women's participation in those outings which are planned for both sexes is basically for the purpose of allowing marriageable young men and women to meet, and the workers

to get to know each other. For the men, the after-work socializing has added meaning, as it is in this context that business deals and factional loyalties are worked out.

Psychologically, new company recruits must deal with the assumption of an adult, responsible role.* For men, the work in the company involves a change of identity, and an emphasis on new aspects of their abilities. There is a lessening of ties with the family of origin, especially for men, and the beginning of a search for a marriage partner, often (approximately 50% of the time)[50] chosen from within the company. As the initial period of training is left behind, men begin to concern themselves with their own promotion, and to test their abilities and prospects against others.

Not all Japanese people work in companies or factories, of course. Although much of what has been said above may hold for shopkeepers and farmers, in these careers, adult status is not attained as suddenly. Young farmers and shopkeepers typically work for a period of years, or even decades under the direction of their fathers. There is a gradual changeover of responsibility from the parent to the child, and full adult status is not clearly delineated. In addition, the daughter or young wife of a farmer does not see her working life as extending only until she marries. Her involvement in the family business is likely to be of a more long term nature. Those salarymen who spent their working years during the pre-war and war time period, were more likely to have experienced less job continuity.

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* See Section III, Learning in the Workplace.

In addition, for farmers, currently available wage-labor alternatives to a total reliance on farming did not exist, and farmers' families underwent severe privations when the harvest was poor.

E. Marriage and Childraising years (27-57 years)

Similar to the sex differences in roles in the workplace, the characteristics of the childraising years are very different for men and women. In the adult world, sex roles are clearly divided, men participating primarily in the workplace, and women primarily in the home. Both of them share parts of each other's world, women during the two or three year period when they are employed outside the home, and men in the several hours a day that they spend with their families. In comparision to the sequential nature of the previous life cycle stages, the workplace and the child-rearing years occur contemporaneously for a given couple, the woman being socially embedded in the home and family, and her husband in the workplace.

The period immediately following marriage is characterized by separation, emotional and physical, from the family of origin. Once children are born, the task of raising them becomes the mother's most important job. After the arrival of a child, the ties between the husband and wife begin to loosen, and the central unit of the family becomes the mother and her children.[60] For women, the responsibilities of raising the children are sobering. She is in primary charge of the children, and it is her responsibility to see that they are well trained and perform well in school. She is expected to provide a warm and nurturant environment for both her husband and children, and her personal abilities and status within her peer group of other wives and mothers hinge on her children's success. Besides these responsibilities to the children and her husband, she is in

charge of maintaining social contacts with neighbors, relatives, and performing other community obligations. In many families, she is also responsible for daily expenditures and long-range budgeting. As the children grow to need less and less of her time, she gradually has more time for her own pursuits, and may enroll in classes, or pursue other interests. A large number of women return to the labor force after their children enter elementary school, causing a prominent "M" curve in the graph of women's labor force participation. Many women also volunteer in consumer movement or other semi-political activities.

There is a difficult lack of fit between social convention and demographic reality in the case of married women who are employed outside the home. Briefly, the norm is that married women (cases of financial necessity aside) do not need to seek an identity or membership outside the home and family and that a "good woman" is exclusively a housewife. Since the tasks of home for a middle-class apartment dweller with the average family of two children and an average apartment of only a few rooms are very light and the arenas for the expression of both the personally creative and the social aspects of self are limited, the life of the "good woman" is often rather empty. If she becomes a kyoiku mama (education mother) and pours her energies into advancing the educational careers of her children she is at least distracted by a challenging task. But this work, unlike the tasks her husband performs at work, is not done in the social context of a work group and cannot satisfy her own needs for such an environment of support and identity confirmation. Moreover her

school-aged children are no longer simply extensions of herself, and she cannot derive all her satisfaction from them, no matter how hard she studies their homework or attends mama juku (classes for mother to help them help their children). Even if she participates in voluntary or interest-oriented activities outside the home, she lacks an all-important social validation.

Although we do not know the motivations of housewives who work outside the home, we do know their numbers which are considerable. Over 68% of the women who work are married--that is, about one quarter of the labor force. These women, if they have children, must have as the Japanese say, "200% lives" for there are few babysitters and limited daycare facilities. Moreover, there are strong social sanctions against working mothers, ranging from fines for missed mid-morning PTA meetings to implications that a child's cold is due to the fact that he lets himself into the house with his own key before his mother gets home from work. Working mothers may be emotionally "blackmailed" in this way, and their susceptibility to such pressures arises, of course, out of the fact that they have internalized the idealized norms concerning the women's role. This problem, as we have seen, is a manifestation of the lack of a socially-valued environment for housewives to display their abilities once their children are no longer small and the lack of a social identity outside of the home.

The husband's responsibilities to the family are mainly discharged through the workplace, and through his financial support. He also is consulted by his wife on important matters concerning the children and

household purchases, although the main responsibility remains with her. The workplace places heavy demands on his time, and time to be with the family is correspondingly limited. Many fathers make it a point, however, to spend Sunday once or twice a month with their family which they jokingly call "famarii saabisu" (family service). From the father's limited role at home comes the expression "father is a Sunday friend."

In the latter part of the marriage and childraising years, typically in the man's late forties, the couple's goal of purchasing their own house or condominium is achieved. This goal requires much mutual planning and financial sacrifice, and for most salarymen is one of the most important tangible accomplishments of this period of his life.

Psychologically, the adults in a new family have major adjustments to make: women must renounce forever the chance to be indulged and dependent in family relationships, and to take on a new role as primary indulger and supporter of others. Women have much less chance than do men to amaeru, and the first years of marriage are most difficult and lonely for them. Most women manage to retain close ties with their own family, and especially with their mothers.

As compared to wives of salarymen, the wives of shopkeepers and farmers have more complex responsibilities, as their assistance is often needed in the family business. In these families, the workplace is not separated from home by a long commute, and so fathers have more time to be

with their children. Grandparents are also more likely to live with the couple, and often this means that the new bride's life is psychologically complicated by the necessity of adapting to the ways of the new family and the personality of her mother-in-law, as well as her husband. However this is somewhat mitigated by the more sociable environment and the chance to learn child rearing techniques from and be supported by, an experienced housewife. The extended family pattern is currently more typical among shopkeepers and farmers and yet was common in families during the war and pre-war years in all levels of society.

F. Retirement (age 55 or 60 - death)

During retirement, as children leave home, and husbands don't, the couple is reunified and reembedded within the family, now with more free time and fewer responsibilities than ever before. Most parents continue to feel an active responsibility for their children until they are married and have produced grandchildren, and there is never a complete loss of the parental relationship between adult children and aging parents.

Contrary, however, to real life, the period of old age in Japan has frequently been considered as "golden".[41] The ideal image is of respected and needed advisors, who are -- supported by their family, integrated into household life, and their period of economic productivity over, are now reaping the rewards of hard-work and self-sacrifice. When aged parents are not so respected and supported,[29] they often explain their situation in terms of generational differences ("young people just don't respect us") or historical and social change -- (nuclear families in small apartments cannot accommodate other kin as was possible "in the old days"). In actual fact, however, the extended family was never as widespread as is popularly believed, and long-ago intergenerational harmony is a convenient fiction.

The relationship between an aged parent and a grown child is said to be one of gratitude, respect and comfortable dependency. The parent is supposed to be able to indulge himself in hobbies or simply in "childish" behavior (especially legitimated by close relationships with

grandchildren) and to amaeru. This is particularly true of men, for older women are still expected to serve more than be served, although they too can expect support and respect from younger family members. There are, of course, cases which approximate the idealized model, but one is more likely to find problems or carefully constructed compromises than concord. While about one quarter of Japanese households are stem family households[57] and about 60% of people over 65 years of age live with their children, the number of grievances related in the media and popular literature and the clear need for social service agencies to take responsibility for many old people demonstrate the problematic nature of the old people's situation. Many couples face insecurity over where they will spend their last years, and the assumption that an oldest son or other adult child will care for them is no longer an automatic solution for a large minority of retired couples.

Chief among the problems associated with aging appears to be the issue of discontinuity, especially for men. For them the family has not been the primary locus of association and social integration since the primary identity-conferring group for men is the workplace. In the change from a group conferred identity in the workplace to a role identity as a grandfather in the family, the men have lost an important source of personal validation. If the discontinuity is complicated by moving into the home of a child, where they may not have lived before, both men and women may find it difficult to adjust to the unique ways of that household and to integrate into the core relationship of the younger mother and children. The aged parents may find their relationship as parents to the son or daughter

problematic, as the son may be tied to a boss in a pseudo-parental relationship and the daughter little inclined to give up her autonomy as the "prime mover" of the household. In addition, during this period, financial difficulties are not uncommon, and for many families, major financial outlays for university tuition and weddings come at or after the time of cessation of salary income. The necessity of dealing with financial strain during the period when their role as breadwinner has been terminated by retirement is often frustrating.

Shopkeepers and farmers are more likely to live in an extended family, and therefore, are less likely to face the necessity of moving to a nursing home, or of living alone or with reluctant kin. Aging or retirement in such families, however, may mean that changing economic circumstances forces the closing of the family shop, or the sale of the family farm. Such events create wrenching psychological difficulties, and, coupled with increasing ill-health and awareness of approaching death, make old age a difficult time for Japanese in all walks of life.

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The numbered references in the text refer to the numbers of works here listed alphabetically.

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